THE BOYS™

The female of the species is more deadly than the male.

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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

THIRTY-EIGHT

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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"I WAS BORN IN THE MONTH OF THE TURNIP BLOSSOM.

"LATER, SOME ASSUMED IT WAS MY ANCESTRAL HOME, HIROSHIMA, THAT MADE ME WHAT I AM. BUT THE TIGER IN THE JUNGLE KNOWS THAT LINGERING BACKGROUND RADIATION BESTOWS NO BOON--BEYOND THE POWER TO GROW A GIANT TUMOR, OR PASS A STOOL GONE RED WITH BLOOD.

"IT WAS NOT HIROSHIMA...

"NEVER HIROSHIMA."

THE INSTANT WHITE-HOT WILD

DID SHE TELL YOU THIS?

DOES SHE TALK?

"IT IS TRUE THAT GREAT GRANDFATHER WAS AT HOME THAT FATEFUL DAY--HE HAD AVOIDED MILITARY SERVICE, WANGLING HIMSELF A CUSHY NUMBER IN THE DILDO INDUSTRY."

"BUT HE HAD TOSSED HIS BEANS UP GREAT GRANDMOTHER THE MONTH BEFORE.

"AND SHE WAS IN THE NORTH, WORKING IN A FACTORY WHERE AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR WERE GROUND UP INTO PET FOOD."

"SO IT WAS NOT HIROSHIMA..."

?

"NEVER HIROSHIMA."

"GRANDFATHER GREW UP FAR AWAY. HE BECAME AN ALGAE DIVER, AND PLIED HIS POINTLESS TRADE IN THE SHALLOWS OFF HOKKAIDO."

"THERE WERE RUMORS THAT POISON FROM THE NUCLEAR BLASTS STILL LINGERED IN THE WATERS TO THE SOUTH, GIVING RISE TO TERRIBLE MUTATIONS AMONGST THE CREATURES OF THE OCEAN...

"AND AMONGST THE PEASANT FOLK WHOSE LIVELIHOOD THEY WERE."

"BUT GRANDFATHER'S FATE WAS TO BE RATHER MORE MUNDANE."

"BESIDES, GRANDMOTHER WAS ALREADY UP THE DUFF. AND HAD, INCIDENTALLY, RECENTLY DECIDED TO BECOME A LESBIAN.

"YOU COULD SAY THAT IN THE END, BOTH OF THEM WERE ALL ABOUT THE CLAM."

"SO FOR THEM, TOO, IT WAS NOT HIROSHIMA...

"NO, IT WAS NEVER HIROSHIMA."

"FATHER WAS CRUSHED BENEATH A GIANT GERMAN WOMAN, DURING A CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDING AT A SUMO CHAMPIONSHIP.

"BUT I HAD BEEN BORN THE WEEK BEFORE. OBVIOUSLY, FOR FATHER, IT WAS NOT HIROSHIMA..."

"FOR HIM, IT WAS NEVER HIROSHIMA."

"MOTHER THRIVED. SHE WAS A SECRETARY AT A TOKYO CORPORATION, TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES THE EQUIVALENT OF VOUGHT-AMERICAN. PROMOTIONS, RAISES, ALL MANNER OF GOOD FORTUNE CAME HER WAY, SEEMINGLY WITHOUT ANY EFFORT ON HER PART AT ALL.

"SHE WAS, IN FACT, PROTECTED BY THE ANCIENT, NAMELESS FORCE THAT WEAVES ITSELF AROUND THE DESTINIES OF BUT A FEW:"

"THOSE FEW BEING THE TRULY, STULTIFYINGLY FUCK-STUPID.

"IF MOTHER STUMBLED IN THE STREET, IT WOULD BE ON A BAR OF GOLD. WHOEVER WALKED BEHIND HER WOULD BE DECAPITATED BY A CRASHING AIRCRAFT IN HER STEAD.

"SHE TRULY WALKED BETWEEN THE RAINDROPS. MEANWHILE, ALL NEAR HER--FROM THE CRIPPLED ORPHAN TO THE SAINTLY BRAIN-SURGEON--WERE SHOWERED IN LUMPS OF TOXIC EXCREMENT.

"THAT ONE HAPPENED."

"TOO CHEAP TO PAY FOR DAYCARE, MOTHER'S ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENT WAS TO HIDE ME UNDERNEATH HER DESK AT WORK."

...TRY AND UNDERSTAND, YOU USELESS, MOTHERLESS DOG-VIOLATORS: IT MAY RESEMBLE NOTHING MORE THAN SLOPPY BLUE BABY FOOD, BUT THAT IS MOST DEFINITELY *NOT* WHAT IT IS...

NOW, THIS COMPANY HAS A GENUINE CHANCE TO STEAL A MARCH ON THE AMERICANS, SO LONG AS TWO BASIC CRITERIA ARE MET. ONE, THAT I CAN STABILISE THE SYNTHETIC COPY OF COMPOUND V, AND TWO, THAT SECURITY IS KEPT AS TIGHT AS A SCHOOLGIRL'S TWAT.

I AM DOING WELL WITH ONE. BUT TWO IS DOOMED TO MISERABLE FAILURE, SO LONG AS TURDS LIKE YOU SPEND ALL YOUR TIME FINGERING EACH OTHER'S ASSHOLES--*INSTEAD OF DESTROYING THE RESIDUE FROM MY EXPERIMENTS, SUCH AS THIS GREAT BIG BUCKET OF THE STUFF I ALMOST PUT MY FUCKING FOOT IN...!*

A THOUSAND APOLOGIES, DOCTOR UDERZO.

WE WILL DISPOSE OF IT AT ONCE, DOCTOR UDERZO--

NO, DICKFACE, YOU WILL NOT DISPOSE OF IT AT ONCE. YOU WILL FETCH AN APPROPRIATE HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CONTAINER, AND YOU WILL DEAL WITH IT ACCORDING TO THE PROTOCOLS.

YES, DOCTOR UDERZO.

OF COURSE, DOCTOR UDERZO.

PERHAPS, DOCTOR UDERZO, IF YOU WERE TO SHARE THE DETAILS OF YOUR WORK WITH YOUR HUMBLE LABORATORY ASSISTANTS, WE COULD BETTER ANTICIPATE YOUR NEEDS REGARDING--

OH, I'M SURE THAT WOULD SUIT OUR EMPLOYERS DOWN TO THE GROUND, WOULDN'T IT? THEN THEY COULD FIRE ME AND GET SOME PAIR OF TALENTLESS BUMBOYS TO FINISH THE JOB FOR A FRACTION OF THE COST--AND I WONDER HOW FAR THEY'D HAVE TO LOOK FOR SOMEONE FITTING THAT DESCRIPTION...?

MY WORK STAYS IN MY HEAD, WHERE NO SEMI-EDUCATED HIRELING CAN ACCESS IT. THERE ARE NO NOTES. DON'T BOTHER LOOKING.

GET ON WITH IT.

FUCK ALMIGHTY, THE RUBBISH I HAVE TO PUT UP WITH...

GLK

GLK

GLK

GLK

?

GLK

GLK

GLK

GLK

WHAT... THE...?

AAAAAAIIIIIIEEEEEEEEEE!!

DOCTOR UDERZO--

OH--!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHH!!

...JINGS.

"I WAS CAPTURED, OF COURSE. AND KEPT.

"IF MOTHER EVER WONDERED WHERE I'D GONE TO, I NEVER HEARD FROM HER. PROBABLY, IF SHE DID REMEMBER THAT SHE HAD A DAUGHTER, THE CORPORATION BOUGHT HER OFF--MOST LIKELY WITH A *MARIE CLAIRE* SUBSCRIPTION.

"THE SECRETS OF THE DOCTOR'S WORK NOW RESIDED SOLELY IN MY BLOOD. I KNOW THIS FOR A FACT--"

"BECAUSE THEY EXTRACTED QUITE A LOT."

"TIME PASSED. I WOULD ESCAPE FROM TIME TO TIME, CERTAIN THAT I SHOULD NOT BE THERE, BUT WITH NO IDEA OF WHERE TO GO.

"TOWARDS ANYONE WHO TRIED TO STOP ME, I REACTED IN A WAY THAT SEEMED COMPLETELY NATURAL."

"OUTSIDE I LEARNED THE NAMES OF THINGS, AND WHAT THEY WERE, BUT HOW THEY...FIT TOGETHER WAS A MYSTERY. IN TRUTH, THAT ANSWER ELUDES ME TO THIS DAY.

"ONCE OR TWICE I FELT I MIGHT BE ON THE CUSP OF SOME SMALL INSIGHT, BUT WAS SPOTTED AND RECAPTURED LONG BEFORE THE PUZZLE SOLVED ITSELF.

"AND SO IT WENT."

"I WOULD BE TRANQUILIZED, AND WAKE UP BATHED AND CLOTHED, BUT MY EXPERIENCES SUGGESTED THESE WERE THINGS I SHOULD BE DOING FOR MYSELF.

"THAT JUST MEANT MORE CONFUSION. MORE FRUSTRATION.

"I PICKED UP SCRAPS OF WHAT THE GUARDS WERE SAYING: LEARNED THAT MY BLOOD HAD YIELDED NOTHING, THAT I MYSELF MIGHT BE ENABLED AS A WEAPON..."

BUT WHAT IF THEY CAN'T--

THEN THEY PROBABLY WASTE THE FUCKING THING.

"AND SO I ESCAPED ONE FINAL TIME."

CHECK THOSE CORNERS... CHECK THOSE CORNERS...

TIGHTEN IT UP, WE'RE GETTING A LITTLE THIN BACK HERE...

THIS LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF...SECRETED RESIN...

THAT'S SHIT, YOU IDIOT.

YOU SURE?

I'M SURE. YOU'VE GOT YOUR FINGERS STUCK IN A LUMP OF HUMAN SHIT.

THEY'RE NOT EXACTLY WHAT YOU'D CALL DISCRETE, ARE THEY? I MEAN DID YOU SEE HOW MUCH FIREPOWER THEY TOOK DOWN THERE?

THEY'RE SECURITY DIVISION, ITS THEIR CALL. AND THEY DID MANAGE TO TRACK HER HERE, DON'T FORGET.

SHE LEFT A TRAIL OF CARNAGE A BLIND MAN COULD FOLLOW...!

KEEP IT TIGHT...

REMEMBER, WE HAVE CLEARANCE TO TERMINATE. ANYTHING DOES STICK ITS HEAD UP, CUT IT IN HALF.

TALK TO ME, PEOPLE...

NOTHING.

BEEN HERE, MAYBE.

LONG GONE NOW.

OKAY, TAKE FIVE.

COOL SHOTGUN, DUDE.

YEAH.

I LIKE TO KEEP IT HANDY...

FOR CLOSE ENCAAAAAAAAAAAHH!!

WHAT THE FUCK--

JESUS--!

WHERE DID--

HE'S UP THERE, HE'S UP THERE--

WHAT'S GOT HIM, FOR--

AAAAAAIIIIIEEEEEEEE!!

JESUS CHRIST--

IT WAS HERE ALL ALONG!

THEY'RE COMIN' OUTTA THE WALLS, THEY'RE COMIN' OUTTA THE GODDAMN WALLS!

WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT--?

FUCK IT!

THIS ONE'S CALLED WITH OR WITHOUT YOU!

SHIT!

AAAAAAH! AAAAAAAH!

WHAT THE HELL IS *HAPPENING* DOWN THERE...?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, MATE.

WE'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

AAAAAAAAHH!!

WE--WE GOTTA LAY DOWN SUPPRESSING FIRE, UH, FALL BACK BY SQUADS--

WHAT FUCKING SQUADS? THOSE TWO ASSHOLES JUST ABOUT WIPED US OUT!

AAAAOOW...!

BUT WE GOTTA--

WE ARE LEAVING!

MOMMMEEEEE!!

GLURK

OH FUCK--

OH FUCK--

OH FUCK--

OH FUCK--

NAAAAHH!

EAT THIS--

NNOOOOOO...!

THAT DON'T SOUND TOO CLEVER.

AAH--

AAAAAH--!

HHHHHHHHHHH

SSSHHHHHHHHH

HOW COME THEY DIDN'T USE GAS FIRST, THEN GO IN SHOOTIN'?

'COS THEY'RE ARSEHOLES.

AAAAK!!

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH THESE MACHO BERKS, THEY THINK GUNS'RE THE ANSWER TO EVERYTHING.

SO WHO'S GONNA TEACH IT TO SIT UP AN' BEG, THEN? YOU WANNA GIVE IT A GO?

IT'S NOT AN IT.

SHE'S A SHE.

SHE'S A HUMAN BEING, WHICH MEANS SHE CAN BE EDUCATED LIKE ANYONE ELSE. LANGUAGE, READING AND WRITING, SOCIAL SKILLS, NOT TO MENTION THE TRICKS OF OUR PARTICULAR TRADE.

IT MIGHT TAKE A WHILE, BUT HAVING READ WHAT KESSLER SENT US I THINK IT CAN BE DONE.

YEAH, BUT DO WE REALLY WANT A HUMAN BEIN'? I THOUGHT WHAT WE WERE AFTER WAS A FUCKIN' KILLIN' MACHINE, SO'S WE'D WIN EVERY BARNEY WE GOT INTO...

I DON'T CARE. I WON'T HAVE HER TREATED LIKE SOME KIND OF PIT BULL.

BUT--

M'SIEU MALLORY?

I VOLUNTEER.

BONJOUR.

LET ME HELP.

"IT TOOK TIME, OF COURSE.

"I HAD MUCH TO LEARN BEFORE I COULD BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND MYSELF."

"AND SOME VESTIGE OF MY OLD EXISTENCE LINGERED. A SHARD IN MY SOUL, SEVERING SOME VITAL CONNECTION THAT COULD NEVER BE REPAIRED.

"IT IS A SAVAGE, FIERCE THING. THERE IS BUT ONE WAY I KNOW TO QUIET IT."

"WHEN THE TIME COMES...I DO WHAT MUST BE DONE."

"I HAD BEEN MADE THE WAY I WAS BY MEN. BY THEIR VIOLATION OF NATURE. BY THEIR TREATMENT OF ME, ATTEMPTING TO REMAKE ME IN AN IMAGE OF THEIR OWN DEVISING.

"BUT I FOUND A NEW LIFE WITH THE BOYS."

...OH.

SO THAT'S IT THEN, IS IT, AYE?

CELA L'EST.

OH.

WELL THAT'S...

RIGHT.

SO LISTEN, UM...AS LONG AS EVERYONE'S TELLIN' ME WHERE THEY CAME FROM AN' EVERYTHING--

WHAT ABOUT *BUTCHER?*

AH, PETIT HUGHIE...!

THOSE FILES ARE SEALED, MY FRIEND.

ASSUMING, OF COURSE, THAT SUCH FILES ACTUALLY EXIST...

Subway
N R W
Downtown &
Brooklyn

N R W
Downtown &
Brooklyn

THE END